

Falcon Focus

A Falcon District Neighborhood Watch Newsletter from the Crime Prevention Unit of the Mesa Police Department

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Chief Jan Strauss

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Identity Theft

Stealing someone's personal identity information is one of the fastest-growing crimes in the United States. Identity theft was the leading consumer fraud complaint reported in 2001. According to the Privacy Rights Clearinghouse, 500,000 individuals are victims of identity theft each year, and that number is growing.

There are many ways that identity thieves could obtain your personal information:

- They steal wallets and purses containing your identification and credit cards.
- They steal your mail, including your bank and credit card statements, pre-approved credit offers and other personal information.
- They complete a "change of address form" to divert your mail to another location.
- They rummage through your trash at home and place of business for personal information.
- They use information shared by you on the internet.

These are just a few examples of how an identity thief could get personal information on you. The following are ways they could be using this information:

- ❖ They open new credit card accounts, using your name, and don't pay the bill. The statement is sent to a different address and eventually reported to your credit report.
- ❖ They establish phone, wireless service or internet service in your name.
- ❖ They open a checking account in your name and write bad checks on that account.
- ❖ They rent homes or apartments, cars and even appliances under your name and never pay the bills.

Minimize your risk by managing your personal information wisely, cautiously and with awareness.

- Before you reveal any personally identifying information, find out how it will be used and whether it will be shared or sold to others. Do not give out information unless you initiated the call or know whom you're dealing with. I.D. thieves may pose as bank employees, internet providers and even government agencies to get you to reveal your SSN, mothers maiden name, account numbers and other identifying information.
- Pay attention to your billing cycles. Follow up with creditors if your statements don't arrive on time and verify mailing information.
- Contact creditors if there are purchases on your statement or you receive bills for purchases you did not make.
- Deposit outgoing mail at the post office and promptly remove mail from your mailbox after it has been delivered.
- Shred your charge receipts, pre-approved credit applications, and other documents that you no longer need and are discarding like medical information, bank statements, checks, and insurance forms.
- Remove your SSN from your drivers' license and only give it when absolutely necessary. Ask to use other types of identifiers. Don't carry your SSN card with you; leave it in a secure place.
- Order a copy of your credit report from each of the three reporting agencies every year. Checking your report on a regular basis can help catch mistakes and fraud before they wreak havoc on your personal finances.

Equifax – www.equifax.com or 1-800-685-1111

Experian – www.experian.com or 1-888-397-3742

Trans Union – www.tuc.com or 1-800-916-8800

You may be a target... But you don't have to be a VICTIM!



GAIN 2002

Saturday, October 26

Getting Arizona Involved in Neighborhoods, also known as GAIN, is right around the corner. For those new to Neighborhood Watch, GAIN is a time set aside for all Mesa residents and businesses (as well as most other cities in Arizona!) to show their support and unity in the effort to rid our neighborhoods of criminal activity by hosting a GAIN Party in your neighborhood. This year, Saturday, October 26, from 4pm – 9 pm has been set-aside for GAIN. To make your GAIN party a success, we invite members of the City Council, State Representatives, Police and Fire specialty units, and other city representatives to visit parties throughout Mesa. If you are interested in holding a GAIN party (it counts as one of your two required annual meetings!) note that specialty units will be visiting parties after 4:00 pm and will stop visiting parties approximately 9:00 p.m. Please plan your party accordingly. Mesa holds the record as having the largest GAIN participation in the state! Let's keep it up, and encourage your neighbors to Get Involved in your Neighborhood!!! A GAIN kick-off event is tentatively set for September 26th, 2002. For more information about GAIN, contact the Mesa Police Crime Prevention Unit at 644-2300 or Lindy Marino, GAIN Coordinator, at 644-3921.

You will now find the **attendance sheet**; know your neighbors "**phone tree**" and the letter to use to **solicit from business** online in .pdf format.

**[www.ci.mesa.az.us/police/
neighborhood_forms.htm](http://www.ci.mesa.az.us/police/neighborhood_forms.htm)**

New Neighborhood Watch Groups

600 N. Arco Cir.	Thom & Jeannie Zehring
2300 E. Capri	Steve & Linda Pennel Leah & Eric Lowe
4200 – 4300 E. Desmoines	Dennis & Michelle Miller Theresa & Bill Sneed
3000 E. Gable	Emily & Mike McCain Kim & Wayne Rosman
2600 – 2700 E. Covina	Mindy & Scott Thompson Liz & Lee Tech

I want to thank each and every one of these Block Captains for all the time and effort they have put into the starting of a Neighborhood Watch in their area. It takes sincere dedication and strong commitment to challenge your neighborhood and community in the fight against crime. Keep up the good work.

WHY NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH?

We are faced with a simple choice. Either we are part of the solution or we are part of the problem. By ignoring and denying that we do have a problem with crime and terrorism in America, we place ourselves, our property and our way of life at risk. By progressively addressing crime and terrorism in our communities we will become part of the solution. An important step towards the solution is for responsible citizens and communities to create partnerships with law enforcement that will address these important quality of life issues. When we take responsibility to become part of the solution, we create pro-active communities that take pride in accomplishments. Neighborhood Watch simply asks participants to immediately report all suspicious persons and activities to your local police department.

WHY YOU NEED NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

- A foreign enemy that has demonstrated total disregard for American lives has declared war on America.
- Domestic terrorists have also established a willingness to destroy lives and property.
- Statistics show that eighty percent of us will become victims of violent crime at least once in our lifetime.
- A major crime is committed in Mesa every nineteen seconds.
- One property crime is committed in Mesa every 20 minutes.
- A vehicle is stolen in Mesa every two hours.
- A robbery occurs in Mesa every 20 hours.
(Source; Mesa Police Crime Analysis)

Don't become a statistic. You cannot change the world by yourself, but a group of people working together through strength can implement positive results. By monitoring and reporting crime responsibly and effectively you will send a clear message to criminals, "Our neighborhood (community) will not tolerate illegal or terrorist behavior. If you chose to break the law or try to otherwise undermine our way of life, then do it somewhere else." By watching out for each other's property, neighbors become active crime fighting partners with law enforcement. We all want to make a difference in the world, but many of us search in vain for a way to accomplish this worthy goal. By working together and supporting real world solutions we can make a difference. You will not only be doing the right thing, but it will make you feel better and give you a very real sense of social accomplishment. You will go to bed at night knowing that you have done something for your community, and if we all did that the world would be a better place.

**Don't loose the "Magic" of an Active
Neighborhood Watch!**

Curfew For Minors

With summer break soon approaching, hordes of teens will be out and about making their way to places of food, fun, entertainment, and employment. But, when is it time for all that fun to end and have your teen return home?

Mesa City Code 6-6-1 says that:

It is unlawful for a minor under the age of sixteen (16) years to be in, or upon a public street, sidewalk, alley, right-of-way, or other public place in the city between the hours of ten (10:00) P.M. and five (5:00) A.M.

It is unlawful for a minor between the ages of sixteen (16) years and eighteen (18) years to be in, or upon a public street, sidewalk, alley, right-of-way, or other public place in the city between the hours of twelve (12:00) midnight and five (5:00) A.M.

The exceptions to the code are:

- Legally emancipated minors
- A minor accompanied by a parent or guardian
- A minor traveling to or from place of lawful trade, occupation, work, business, or profession with permission from parent or guardian
- The presence of the minor is necessitated by an emergency
- The presence of the minor is occasioned by their attendance at or return from functions sponsored by or related to religious, school, civic, or non-profit organizations with the permission of a parent or guardian

Permission to a minor must be given prior to the date and time of the offense, authorizing the minor to be at a specific location or authorizing the minor to perform a legitimate errand or activity, and the minor was at that location, was traveling to or from that location, or was performing that errand or activity.

Penalty:

Any person convicted of a violation of any provision of this chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be punished by a fine not to exceed \$2500.00 or by imprisonment not to exceed 6 months, or both.

SCAMBUSTERS

The one stop resource for scam and fraud information. Check out "Urban Legends" to see if that chain e-mail is true or not before forwarding it to someone else. Find out if that virus e-mail alert is true or a hoax before you delete an important program on your system. Visit their web site at:

www.scambusters.com

PHONE NUMBERS



YOU MAY NEED...

Traffic Unit.....644-3533
(Motor Officers)

Falcon Substation.....644-2598
(Speed Radar Trailer)

Pace Car Program.....644-5004

Radar Gun Checkout.....644-2160

Street Barricades.....644-2160

Clean Sweep.....644-4423

Fire Prevention.....644-2200

Hotlines

Gang Hotline (644-GANG)(480) 644-4264
Narcotics Hotline.....(602) 440-5081
Stolen Vehicle/Chop Shop Hotline.....(480) 644-2880
Street Light Hotline.....(480) 644-3191
Fraud Alert Hotline.....(480) 644-2345

Watch Your Car Program Registration

1-888-668-4433

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

G.A.I.N. KICK-OFF 2002

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26TH

EAST VALLEY INSTITUTE FOR TECHNOLOGY

OPPORTUNITY FOR NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH LEADERS TO MEET MESA CITY AND POLICE PERSONNEL, AND GATHER INFORMATION TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND PREPARE FOR THEIR G.A.I.N. EVENT. THIS SPECIAL EVENT WILL BE BY INVITATION ONLY, AND WILL NOT BE OPEN TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

G.A.I.N. 2002

GETTING ARIZONA INVOLVED IN NEIGHBORHOODS
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26TH FROM 4:00 – 9:00 P.M.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH EVENTS AND PARTIES HELD
THROUGHOUT MESA.



*Happy
Flag
Day!*

Fraud & Scams

In the fight against fraud & scams, the Mesa Police Department offers prevention information to the community about the latest fraud schemes and con games. Knowing what they are and how they work can help you avoid being a victim.

The Fraud Alert Hotline, at (480) 644-2345 provides the latest information about fraud and scam activity. The recorded message provides information about the criminal activity, how it unfolds, and prevention tips.

The Fraud & Scams web site, at www.ci.mesa.az.us/police/fraud provides detailed information on a variety of scams and frauds.

If you have been a victim of a fraud or scam, or suspect that non-legitimate activity may be in progress because of information you received in the mail or on the phone, please call (480) 644-5014 so the information may be shared with others.

**Prevention is everywhere.
Let's work together to fight
CRIME!**

Mesa Neighborhood Watch Stats

Total Mesa Neighborhood Watches.....	728
Falcon District.....	212
Superstition District.....	297
Dobson District.....	101
Central District.....	117
Total Captains & Assistants.....	1,318
Falcon Captains & Assistants.....	354

**Crime Prevention Specialist
Jerry Quarles, CPS**

Falcon District Neighborhood Watch Coordinator

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E-mail: jerry_quarles@ci.mesa.az.us

Community Relations Unit:

480-644-2300

Fax: 480-644-2800

Mesa City Home Page:

www.ci.mesa.az.us